



FALL 2004



KEEPING CHIP FAMILIES INFORMED

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IS IT A COLD OR THE FLU??

Your child is sent home from school with a sore throat, cough, and high fever. Could it be the flu? Or is it a common cold? Here is a guide to common symptoms.

Symptoms

Onset of illness was	Flu sudden	Cold slow
Child's fever is	high	mild/none
Child's cough is	dry	severe/hacking
Child's head is	achy	headache-free
Child's throat is	not sore	sore
Child's appetite is	decreased	normal
Child's muscles are	achy	fine
Child is	tired	not tired
Child has	chills	no chills

An important thing to remember is that flu symptoms vary from child to child. If you suspect the flu, call your CHIP health care provider. Antibiotics do not help with the flu or with a cold unless a secondary infection, such as an ear infection, is present. Overuse of antibiotics causes many health problems. An important but often overlooked precaution is to have your children wash their hands thoroughly.

Flu shots are available, but in short supply. Flu shots are recommended for all children ages 6 to 23 months, pregnant women past their first trimester, senior citizens, and those with chronic health problems.

If your child has the flu, have him or her drink plenty of fluids. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) may be given to children with the flu or a cold. Never give aspirin to a child with flu or cold symptoms. A potentially fatal illness called Reye's Syndrome may result.

Baby Bottle Tooth Decay



Baby bottle tooth decay is caused by frequent and long-term exposure of a child's teeth to liquids containing sugars.

These liquids include milk, formula, fruit juice, sodas, and other sweetened drinks. The upper front teeth are the most easily decayed.

A child's teeth may start to decay as soon as they appear. By the time the decay is noticed it may be too late to save the child's teeth. Treatment can cost thousands of dollars. You can help protect your child's teeth by doing the following:

- After each feeding, wipe the child's gums with a clean, damp cloth. Begin brushing your child's teeth with a small, soft toothbrush as soon as the first tooth appears. (Children up to the age of seven may need help brushing their teeth.)
- Never allow your child to fall asleep with a bottle of milk or any sweetened liquid. If your child refuses to fall asleep without a bottle, fill it with water and nothing else.
- Your child's first dental visit should occur after the first tooth appears, but no later than the first birthday. Talk to your dentist about the need for fluoride treatments or supplements.



Waiting List 1-2 Months...



CHIP has more than 200 children on the waiting list. To avoid the wait, be sure to send your renewal application in on time! Renewal applications are

sent to you 60 days before your CHIP coverage ends!

Remember...

NEW DENTAL BENEFIT YEAR



That's right! The CHIP dental benefit year starts over each October 1 and ends September 30 of the next year. The dental benefit year is the same for all children covered by CHIP even though families re-enroll at different times. CHIP pays up to \$350 per dental benefit year for each CHIP-insured child. There are no copayments for dental services. If you need the name and telephone number of a CHIP dentist you can refer to the Dental Provider List we sent you, visit the CHIP website at www.chip.state.mt.us, or call CHIP toll free at 1-877-543-7669.



Regular dental visits can help protect your child's smile for years to come.

Make Gun Safety A Priority In Your Home



Hunting season is here again. Many children in Montana participate in this annual activity with their families. Unfortunately, sometimes having a firearm in the home can lead to serious injury and even death. According to the state Fetal, Infant, and Child Mortality Review program (FICMR), an average of 12 Montana children are killed each year due to accidents involving firearms. The same study found only 64% of Montana families who keep firearms in or around their homes keep them stored in a secure, locked cabinet or storage container.

Here are some handy tips to help keep your children safe year-round:

- If you own a gun, unload it and lock it up between uses.
- Store and lock ammunition separately from firearms.
- Hide the keys where your kids can't find them.
- Ask if guns are safely stored at places your children visit or play, including homes of day-care providers.
- Talk to your children about guns and gun safety.
- Teach children not to touch guns and to tell an adult if they find one.

The Montana Shooting Sports Association reminds children there are simple rules to follow for gun safety.

- Don't touch. Never touch a gun without a parent's permission.
- If a friend plays with a real gun, leave immediately and tell an adult.
- Always assume every gun is loaded.
- Never point a gun at anyone!
- Never point a gun at anything you don't intend to shoot.
- If you are shooting a gun with adult supervision, always keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.

Project ChildSafe is an organization striving to educate our nation on firearm safety. As part of their outreach, they are offering free firearm safety kits. The kits include gunlocks that can be used on many types of guns. To get your free firearm safety kit, call your local law enforcement office. For more information, visit the Project ChildSafe website at www.projectchildsafesafe.org.



SIDEWALK CHALK

Fall is a great time for kids to be outside with color and imagination. This chalk is non-toxic (won't hurt anyone or anything) and washes off with water.

What you will need:

An empty jar with a lid
A paintbrush
1 cup powdered dry milk
1 cup water
½ teaspoon food coloring

Pour the water into the jar. Add the dried milk powder and the food coloring. Stir very well until the mixture is all mixed. For more fun, make up different colors in different jars. Next, with a paintbrush, draw colorful pictures on sidewalks or on rocks. If you have leftover chalk, close the lid and save it for the next time you want to be creative. Have fun!

CHIP & Indian Health Services

Native American children enrolled in CHIP have the unique opportunity to use CHIP and the benefits offered through Indian Health Services (IHS). It is very important for families to tell the IHS clinic about their child's CHIP coverage whenever seeking medical or dental care.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!



Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP)

Toll Free:
1-877-543-7669
(1-877-KIDSNOW)



CHIP Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 202951
Helena, MT 59620-2951



CHIP Web Site Address:
www.chip.state.mt.us



CHIP Email Address:
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